

SUMMARY OF PLANNED OR CURRENT MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT TAKING PLACE IN WILLIAMSPORT

Over the past four years, Williamsport has made multiple developments. These developments include the \$200,000 town-funded revitalization of the Springfield Farm Barn. The barn is currently used to house the Town Museum and hosts events, including the annual World War II weekend and USO dance. Access to the adjacent Byron Memorial Park was improved to better handle traffic flow patterns with a \$175,000 Project Open Space grant. Eight mini-pavilions were added to the park with an \$88,000 DNR Community Parks and Playgrounds grant to better accommodate visitors to Williamsport. A \$64,000 playground was added. Williamsport has just received a \$30,000 grant to construct a bike/hike path from the Byron Memorial park to Springfield Farm, in a effort to better connect the town's tourism assets.

Williamsport is planning revitalization of Town Center to promote foot and bike traffic throughout the Town and connect Springfield Farm/Byron Memorial Park with the C&O Canal/River Bottom/Doubleday Hill area. A "greening" of Town Center is already underway with a \$15,000 Urban Greening grant to install trees on walks and at the C& Canal gateway.

Plans for the revitalization will include a bike/hike lane from the canal, a visitor's center, improved informational and heritage signage and strategies to attract tourism-appropriate business to Town Center, including building improvements and informational and marketing materials.

New signage was placed at Doubleday Hill and it is planned to move the authentic cannons back to Riverview Cemetery and Doubleday Hill. Historically accurate carriages may be constructed for them.

River Bottom is undergoing several upgrades including a new boat ramp, bank improvements, and expanded parking, funded by a \$149,000 grant. Plans are also under way to build a small boat ramp for emergency operations and canoe/kayak launching.

The National Park Service is looking at several major improvements to the canal including revitalization of the railroad lift bridge, the lock, and the lock house. Funding and work on the section of the canal that is currently impassable, just south of Williamsport, is underway as well. The Park Service also has plans for the rebuilding of the aqueduct over Conococheague Creek. The completion of these projects will make Williamsport unique to canal visitors because they will be able to experience multiple aspects of the canal at one location.

Byron Memorial Park hosts the annual Fourth of July celebration and fireworks, Williamsport Days and Christmas light display. It also brings in visitors for many other events such as craft fairs, car shows and more. The park is used daily during the warmer seasons for picnics, playgrounds, and swimming. Springfield Farm's barn, having been recently revitalized, is proving to be a perfect location for many events including World War II Weekend's USO dance and movie, receptions and the 2009 Christmas show and tree display.

Williamsport has ordered two replica canal boats that will be used to transport visitors in the revitalized "canal experience". The establishment of a town information/service center near the canal is also planned to promote visitation of the Town's other heritage tourism sites.

In order to build on a solid foundation, Williamsport is working to bring existing infrastructure to date. A \$6 million grant and loan for a sewer upgrade and a \$1 million Green Grant water meter upgrade are underway. Sidewalks and crossing lights at most of the major intersections have been updated and made ADA accessible.

PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT

One of the greatest advantages Williamsport has is the ease of pedestrian movement between sites. The distance from the west end of town

to the east end is only 2000 feet with sidewalks and crosswalks. Crossing lights and ADA accessible curbs provide for a pleasant and safe experience for all visitors. The town is working to provide benches for resting and bike racks for bikers.

Parking - Availability

Adequate parking for the proposed growth is available. Overflow parking areas are being considered and planned for the future.

Marked parking for 15 vehicles and room for approximately 40 vehicles in unmarked spaces is available on the west end of town at River Bottom. Additional parking in River Bottom is planned and funded. There are two parking lots at the C&O Canal. One is off Main Street near Lock 44, which has parking for approximately 16 vehicles in an unmarked space, and the other, at Cushwa Basin, has unmarked parking for approximately 40 vehicles.

Parking between west and east historic attractions and east end historic attractions is primarily on-street parking. There are 112 marked spaces along Potomac Street from the canal to the park entrance, with additional parking past the park entrance. Conococheague Street has 110 marked spaces. In Town Center, 100 spaces are controlled with meters, most near the intersection of Potomac Street and Conococheague Street.

The side streets of Frederick Street, Vermont Street, Church Street, Salisbury Street and Artizan Street have 466 marked parking spaces combined.

On the east end of town, parking for the Byron Memorial Park is available in two lots for a total of 114 marked spaces. Springfield Farm has a parking lot with 79 marked spaces and room for approximately 7 vehicles in front of the Town Museum in unmarked spaces. Overall, there is currently space for approximately 1,000 vehicles.

Possible overflow parking in the M&T Bank parking lot, the Zion Lutheran Church lot, and Ron's Garage lot total an additional 147 parking spaces in Town Center, not included in the number above.

RECOMMENDATIONS/IMPLEMENTATION

1. Williamsport would benefit from a planning effort to guide the revitalization activities for downtown.

- (a) Williamsport has completed a Town Center Revitalization Study. The study lays out a plan to revitalize the core area outlined in the Heart of the Civil Way Heritage Area (HCWHA) Management Plan. All of the key recommendations are being explored as set forth in the study.

2. Given the recreation resources of the C&O Canal, the town has an opportunity to capitalize on tourists and recreational users already coming to Williamsport.

(a) Williamsport understands the impact of the canal on tourism and will explore ways of making a town connection to the canal as well as connecting all the other historic assets of the town.

3. The extra width in the streets in the core of downtown could be converted to greenways that would take bikers, pedestrians, and kayakers into downtown from the C&O Canal.

(a) Discussions are currently underway to take advantage of the streetscape in Williamsport. The potential difficulties in making changes to the two major roadways, both state roads, are being looked at and acceptable solutions will be presented.

4. The rehabilitation of the town clock building should be a priority.

(a) The clock tower, or Pythian Castle, is an issue the town is looking to resolve.

MISCELLANEOUS PROJECTS

- Painting of Town Hall - Inmates
- Renovation of the Springfield Farm Barn

- Sidewalk Project - \$20,500.00. Springfield Farm Barn Funded
By Washington ARKA Funds
- Springfield Farm Barn Bathroom Project - \$50,000.00
- Painting of Spring Field Farm Barn
- Boat Ramp Project Funded by DNR \$149,000.00.
- Restoration of River View Cemetery.
- Baby Pool Restoration Funded by ARRA \$3,995.00.
- Replacement of Town of Williamsport Water Meters - MDE -
ARRA Project.
- Welcome Sign Project - Inmates
- Urban Greening Grant - Tree Planting - Funded by DNR \$15,000.00.
- Byron Memorial Recreation Trail - Funded by Md. State Highway
Administration - \$30,000.00